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Students Fear for K-School Reputation

By SUSAN B. GLASSER

Kennedy School students yesterday expressed reservations about the recently announced Kennedy School collaboration with the CIA and said that the project raises questions about the school's research priorities.

An informal survey of 20 students at the school revealed that many students are concerned about the implications of the \$1.2 million CIA project for the school's academic standards. Students also said that the collaboration is just another of a string of negative events which are plaguing the Kennedy School and damaging its reputation.

"All of the recent events have been negative, within a very tight time period," said Ginger Knox, a second-year student in the Master's of Public Policy (MPP) program. "But these events are just symptoms of the larger problems here, the system of priorities."

She said that the Kennedy School's

cooperation with the CIA may undermine the integrity of the study's results. "If you always get your [research] money from the same pool of dollars, then you expect them to determine some of its outcome," Knox said. "And you get a negative connotation from that."

The Kennedy School announced the CIA research project last week and billed it as an unprecedented stage in the CIA's relations with academia. The three-year project has been described as a major step forward for the CIA because the research will be made public and the intelligence agency will be identified as the funder of the project.

But Kennedy School students said that while the agreement may represent a step forward for the CIA, it raises questions about the school's academic standards.

"I'm not thrilled about the CIA
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K-Schoolers Speak of Hurt Reputation

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stuff," said Karen Korabluk, a second-year MPP. "We're going to be encouraging a lot more defense-related research here, and I think that might be skewing the priorities."

Korabluk, and several other students, said the Kennedy School's agreement with the CIA suggests that the school places undue weight on the value of defense-related research and close links with the government at the expense of less glamorous public policy issues.

"There is a lot of 'mea and missiles' research that goes on here, but we need to see more human

resources-type stuff," Korabluk said.

"I am very concerned about the [project] with the CIA—this thing will be used to fund more and more cases which have to do with international security," said Sheila K. Taber, a second-year MPP.

But other students said they thought the CIA-Kennedy School collaboration was a hallmark for the agency and that the Kennedy School would not suffer.

"In order for a Central Intelligence Agency-type organization to exist, it needs to gain access to the best people," said Adam Diamant, a first-year MPP student. By working with

the Kennedy School, the CIA is "on a sort of ethical high ground, and on that level I think it's pretty good," he said.

Diamant, who said he was unsure about his views on the program, added, "The one thing that is encouraging is that, by coming to Harvard, the agency doesn't seem to have a preconceived notion about what the research will turn up."

But Eric D. Fine, a Kennedy School student government officer and first-year student in the Master's of Public Administration (MPA) program, added a caveat to Diamant's endorsement of the CIA project.

He said that the CIA may end up having too much control over the research findings, because they funded the program. "I doubt that the study would be conducted without the money," Fine said. "But as a choice between study or no study, obviously I'd favor it."

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